**College of Humanities Research Fellow Report**

Semester awarded: Fall 2018
**Researcher:** Ana Sánchez-Muñoz, Professor, Chicana/o Studies
**Title of project:** *Linguistic Resistance: Spanish Language Use and its Impact on Two Southwestern Communities*

 **1.** **Brief description of the project**

My research project examines Spanish language by Latinx communities in public spaces during the first year and a half of the Trump administration. In particular, I analyze the impact of fear on shifting linguistic trends and the potentially negative consequences of language suppression on the health and well-being of the Latinx population. My research question is whether there has been a recent shift in the attitudes of Latinx speakers toward using Spanish as well as the ways in which the language is used beyond private and familiar environments. Thanks to the Fall 2018 Research Fellowship, I have had the time to collect and transcribe data and examine the possible impact of overt anti-immigrant and anti-Spanish sentiments on language shift.

The sample population is first and second generation Latinx residing in two predominantly Spanish-speaking areas of Southern California and Arizona. The data collection procedure included open-ended sociolinguistic interviews, which elicit information about speakers’ attitudes and the use of Spanish in public, especially paying attention to access to health services. Thanks to the Research Fellowship, I was able to conduct over one hundred interviews and travel out of state for data collection. Data from Arizona and California helps us shed light on how diverse Spanish-speaking communities are negotiating language use in the face of immigrant stress, especially as there are increased racial attacks, linguistic discrimination and linguistic profiling since the last elections as a result of hegemonic language ideologies in the country.

My research so far points to an interesting difference in language attitudes and use between first and second generation Latinx. The former, who are older speakers for whom Spanish is the dominant or main language, report more marked negative consequences of language suppression on their health and well-being. By contrast, second generation Latinx, who are younger speakers of Spanish report an increased awareness of the use of Spanish as a tool of activism and political resistance.

**2.​ Dissemination of research**
 The results of this research project will be disseminated in different ways:

1. **Peer Reviewed Publications**

Thanks to the CoH Research Fellowship, I was able to write and submit one academic article to a peer-reviewed Journal of Latina/o Studies (*Chiricú Journal*, ISSN 0277-7223, e-ISSN 2472-4521). My article titled “**Spanish as a Tool of Latinx Resistance against Repression in a Hostile Political Climate**” is currently under revision.

Additionally, I am now working on a second paper focusing on the first generation of speakers exclusively. Once finished, this manuscript will be submitted for publication to the peer-reviewed Linguistics Journal *IJLASSO* (*International Journal of the Linguistic Association of the Southwest*) or to *Aztlán Journal*.

 Finally, I also wrote one article titled “Language Matters: On teaching Spanish in Chicana/o Studies” to be published in a peer-reviewed critical anthology in commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies.

1. **Conference presentations**

The following papers have been accepted for presentation at important Linguistics Conferences during the Spring 2019 semester:

* **“When fear is louder than words: Spanish language use in public spaces.”** To be presented at the 6th National Symposium on Spanish as a Heritage Language, which will take place on February 21-23 at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. This is the most important conference in the field of Spanish as Heritage Language in the U.S.
* **"When speaking Spanish becomes a tool of resistance: Language attitudes and ideologies among 2nd generation Heritage Language Students."** To be presented at the 2nd International Symposium of Linguistic Attitudes towards Spanish, Portuguese and Related Languages (LASPR II), which will take place on April 12-13 at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
* Finally, I have been invited by the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico in San Juan, Puerto Rico, to give a key note address as a plenary speaker for the V International Congress on Visual Culture on April 15-16, 2019 (<http://onvisualculture.com/congress/program/#plenary-speakers>). My talk titled “**Attractive Image/Repulsive words. When inclusion in Hollywood stays at the surface**” will address the image of Latinx portrayed by popular media and the effects on Spanish language maintenance/shift.

**3. ​Description of how the project may benefit curriculum and teaching, diversity and/or inclusivity, or collaborations with other faculty.**

This project is benefitting curriculum and teaching. Specifically, I am referring to issues of language maintenance and minority silencing in my CHS 433 (Language Acquisition in Chicanas/os and other ESL). The results obtained in this research have important implications for instruction in heritage language courses, not only in Spanish but also in any other U.S. Heritage Language. Understanding the impact of sociopolitical pressures and other factors that promote or hinder heritage language maintenance is crucial, especially for language instructors to get a better sense of the population that they serve.

My research is also fostering collaboration with other colleagues in the field. For instance, a former CHS graduate student who is now in Arizona State University, helped with data collection in Phoenix, AZ and we plan on collaborating on future projects comparing data between Southern California and Arizona. I plan to continue working and collaborating with colleagues in my field and incorporating the results of my research to improve and enhance my teaching.

To conclude, I am grateful to the College of Humanities for their support. Release-time fellowships and awards, such as the Research Fellowship which I was awarded in Fall 2018, are crucial for me to be able to maintain an active research agenda and move forward to develop into relevant areas of study.